

## Largest Dürer show in Germany in 40 years opens at Germanisches Nationalmuseum



A visitor looks at drawings at the Albrecht Dürer exhibition during a press preview in the Germanisches Museum in Nuremberg, Germany, Tuesday, May 22, 2012.

Germany's biggest exhibit of works by the German artist Albrecht Dürer will open to the public from May 24 until September 2, 2012. (AP Photo/Matthias Schrader.



**NUREMBERG.-** [The Germanisches Nationalmuseum](#) is presenting the early work of the most famous German artist. 51 lenders from 12 countries sent 120 of Dürer's most important works to Nuremberg.

Since 2009 an international research team at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum has occupied itself with the early works of Albrecht Dürer, displaying its results starting 24 May. The exhibition is not prompted by biographical key dates or jubilees but by the conclusion of the research project and its exciting answers to the questions asked at the start: why and how did Dürer, in his hometown Nuremberg, become one of the greatest artists in Europe? What defined the circumstances and surroundings of his early development? As Prof. Dr. G. Ulrich Großmann, director-general of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, expressed with joy and gratification: "When I suggested a Dürer project seven years ago, I knew indeed that new research was urgently needed but I had no idea how much new material and how many new insights into the work of the most famous artist in the German-language region would in fact emerge".

Four exhibition sections on just under 900 square meters invite you to discover 200 top-class loans from twelve countries as well as the collections of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum. The thematic spectrum ranges from "The Self and its New Media", "Copying and Making New", "Powerful Art: Dürer as a Dramatist" to "What is Art?".

The exhibition spans Dürer's creative period until 1505 when he set off on his second Venetian journey. The oldest work is from 1484 – Self-Portrait from the Albertina in Vienna – and the latest from 1504 – Adoration of the Magi from the Uffizi in Florence. The most outstanding works from Dürer's early years are here brought together: his selfportraits and portraits of his family and friends, his ambitious nature studies and dramatic narratives, recorded in freely executed drawings and sumptuous panel paintings. Dürer may be experienced as painter and draughtsman as well as designer for craftwork and glass painting in a unique way.

Visitors will familiarize themselves with the social milieu in which Dürer grew up through, among others, the portraits of his neighbours and companions in the exhibition and through an interactive wall installation of the Burgstraße in the so-called 250 square meter Dürer Laboratory. The project co-ordinator, Dr. Thomas Eser, characterises the Burgstraße as a "concentration of superlatives of economic and intellectual history. It is here where Dürer

settled as an effectively start-up entrepreneur, built his own, new painter's workshop and acquired his future patrons, including among his neighbours".

In the 15th century Nuremberg was an economic and cultural centre, including artistically. "The city was home to Hans Pleydenwurff, the most important painter of his time. Ultimately, it was in the workshop of his successor that Dürer grew up. These local impulses stand side by side with those of the Italian Renaissance". This is how Dr. Daniel Hess, Head of the Research and Exhibition Project "The Early Dürer", describes the unrivalled city of Nuremberg at the time of Dürer.

The exhibition not only shows Dürer in his artistic and social surroundings, but the visitor is able to look over the master's shoulder, so to speak, while he paints. With the help of infrared photographs the designs underneath the paint layer are made visible, revealing the artist's struggle with pictorial demands and working processes.

Families with children age 6 and above can play the role of researchers: in the Action Room "AD: Alles Dürer" of the Education Centre of the museums in Nuremberg, Dürer comes to life as a child, an adolescent, apprentice and student, a seeker and businessman.

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Logo by Jonathan Mak

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